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ABSTRACT

A 4-man field team from the University of Colorado, under the auspices of the National Study of American Indian Education, spent 6 weeks in the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, Montana, in the fall of 1968. The team studied the public school system of Browning, Montana, the major town on the reservation and reported on educational facilities, enrollment, teacher characteristics, and curricular offerings. Some of the problems noted include inadequate housing for teaching staff, limited boarding facilities for students, inadequate educational facilities, limited curricular offerings, and high operational expenses. Background information covering physical, social, and economic aspects of the area is also presented. A bibliography with emphasis on the Blackfeet Indians is included. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (JH)

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FINAL REPORT

Community Background Reports

Series I

No. 7

Browning, Montana;

Blackfeet Indian Reservation, Montana

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RC004438

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

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The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

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Blackfeet
Reservation

BLACKFEET INDIAN RESERVATION
MONTANA

MAP 1

PREFACE

A four-man field team from the University of Colorado, under the auspices of the National Study of American Indian Education, spent six weeks in the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, Montana, in the fall of 1968. The team studied the public school system of Browning, Montana, the major town on the Reservation.

The University of Colorado team would like to thank those persons of the school system, town, BIA, and tribe who made our stay and study not only profitable but also enjoyable.

BROWNING MONTANA; BLACKFEET INDIAN RESERVATION

Physical Environment

The Blackfeet Indian Reservation is situated in North Central Montana at the base of the eastern slope of the northern Rocky Mountains, just east of Glacier National Park, immediately south of the Canadian border. Most of the reservation covers a transitional foothill area, 3,500 to 4,000 feet in elevation between the Great Plains to the east and the Rocky Mountains to the west. The reservation occupies an area of about 1,500,000 acres (Map 1).

The town of Browning, site of the schools examined by the University of Colorado research team, is located in the west central portion of the reservation.

The climate is of the semi-arid continental type. Most of the reservation is characterized by low rainfall, great temperature extremes, large number of sunny days, and low relative humidity. At times the area is subject to strong and persistent westerly winds, which usually are more severe during the early spring months. At lower elevation "chinook" or warm winds often occur during the winter months and clean the winter grazing lands of winter snow. Hot winds arise occasionally from the southwest during the dry season. The reservation has cold, relatively dry winters, and fairly warm summers, with a pronounced wet season in May and June. Average rainfall ranges from 32 inches in the west to 11.4 inches on the eastern edge. Average frost-free days run from 80 days in the western portion to 120 in the eastern portion. Highest temperature recorded is 98° F., lowest temperature recorded is 56° F. below zero. Mean January temperature is 18° F.; mean July temperature is 62° F.

Transportation

The Blackfeet Reservation is traversed by two major highways, US 2 from east to west and US 89 from north to south. Daily round trip bus schedules are available to Great Falls, Kallspell, and to Cut Bank from Browning. The main line of the Great Northern Railroad serves the reservation. Daily passenger service is availabel at Browning to Seattle and Minneapolis. Another train to the same points may be boarded at Cut Bank, 35 miles east of Browning. The nearest commercial airport is located at Great Falls: Frontier, Northwest, Western, and West Coast Airlines serve this area.

Glacier County, Pondera County, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs are responsible for road construction and maintenance of roads within the reservation. Of the 431 miles of roads into these jurisdictions, Glacier County has approximately 195 miles, Pondera County has approximately 30 miles, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs has approximately 206 miles. There are many miles of trails not included in the mileage indicated which do not receive maintenance; they are basically private roads used for land access.

The transportation facilities used for the Blackfeet Reservation are adequate except for the roads within the reservation. Many of the main traffic roads are not hard surfaced.

History

The name Blackfeet probably has reference to either black-painted moccasins or the discoloring of moccasins by ashes from prairie fires. The Blackfeet, members of the Algonkian linguistic families, seem to have been the vanguard in the movement of Indian groups from the northeastern forests to the northwestern plains. In the 18th century the Blackfeet had already begun to acquire by trade the weapons and horses which were to make them the strongest military power on the northwestern buffalo plains. The Blackfeet Confederacy was made up of three sub-tribes: the Piegan, the Blood, and Siksika proper.

Until confined to the reservations in the late 19th century, Blackfeet held most of the immense territory from the north Saskatchewan River in Canada to the southern headstreams of the Missouri River in Montana, and from the eastern border of Montana to the base of the Rocky Mountains. The semi-nomadic buffalo culture of the Blackfeet was that of the plains tribes generally. The Blackfeet were famous horsemen and hunters, brave and savage warriors who were greatly feared by their enemies.

While they did not generally attack white immigrants, the

Blackfeet became hostile as early American settlers increasingly threatened their lands and buffalo. The tribe did not negotiate a treaty with the United States until 1855 when part of the original Blackfeet land was designated Blackfeet hunting territory to be shared for 99 years by the Flat Heads, Gros Ventres, and Assiniboines in addition to the Blackfeet. The treaty was intended to keep the peace, but did not.

Even the good influence of such missionaries as Father de Smet and the competence of some government agents were not enough to offset the activities of unscrupulous traders, prospectors for gold and land-hungry settlers. When the tribe did not receive annuities promised under the treaty, Blackfeet depredation against stage coaches and ranches intensified, with retaliatory destruction of Indian villages and camps.

The decline of the buffalo at this same time, as well as disease and starvation greatly reduced the tribe in both number and spirit. By 1888 all United States Blackfeet were gathered onto a reservation in northwest Montana. At first government agents tried to impose an agricultural economy on the nomadic Blackfeet. Failure to use land irrigated by projects in 1908 illustrated the persistent Indian prejudice against initial farm planting. On the other hand, the Piegans or Blackfeet were successful as cattlemen, using large portions of their annuities to purchase cattle and horses. Considerable progress had been made by 1900, when the Commissioner of Indian Affairs reported that 12,000 head of cattle and 22,000 horses and mules were Indian owned.

In spite of the disaster in the 1920's caused by drought and excessively severe winters, the Blackfeet have continued to progress in the raising of livestock. Increased interest was taken in small scale subsistence farming in the 1920's. The introduction of mechanization procedures has limited the economic potential of agricultural activities to a relatively few Indians.

Today, approximately 50 per cent of the enrolled membership of the Blackfeet live away from the reservation. Of the estimated 6,400 Indians living on the reservation, approximately one-third (2,200) live in Browning, the Agency and Tribal headquarters. The remainder reside in widely scattered localities on their own allotments. Some of the anthropologists who have studied the Blackfeet are Wissler, Lewis, Steward and Ewers.

Population (1968)[1]

The total population on the Blackfeet Reservation is 10,181.

[1]The major source for demographic and economic data in this report is Bureau of Indian Affairs, Profile: Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Reservation, Montana, Claims Legislation Report, Browning, Montana; 28 August 1968, Mimeo.

The white population is 3,760. The total Indian population in and around the reservation is 6,406; this is composed of 3,156 males and 3,250 females. Population within the reservation is 5,430 total, this consists of 2,678 males and 2,752 females. The number of families on the reservation is 1,108; the average number of people per family is 4.9. The number of Indians living adjacent to the reservation is 976; the number of families living adjacent to the reservation is 200; the average number of people per family living adjacent to the reservation is 4.9.

The population is predominantly youthful, with almost 54 per cent of the population under the age of nineteen. On the basis of the years 1940 to 1967 the rate of population growth is 1.8 per cent per year. Due to the present lack of employment opportunities there is a heavy out-migration for employment and training purposes.

The "lingua franca" on the reservation is English. Of a random sample of 33 parents interviewed in the Browning area, 30 spoke English alone, none spoke an Indian language alone, and three were bilingual.

Government

On the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and in the town of Browning there are overlapping jurisdictions by several agencies. The Tribe, the Federal Government, the State, the County and the town of Browning all play a role in the functions of government.

The Blackfeet Tribe

On June 18, 1934, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act, which gave the Blackfeet the right to establish a government. In 1935 a constitution of the Blackfeet was drawn up and ratified by the tribal members. In 1936 a corporate charter was drawn up and ratified by the tribal members. Out of these laws a governing body was provided to manage and supervise all tribal property and affairs. This politically organized body, consisting of 13 members which was later reduced to 9, is elected by the Tribe's enrolled members. It is known as the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council.

From within this council is elected a chairman and a vice-chairman. The council is a legislative body. It has the additional duties of administration and adjudication of laws.

Since the adoption of the Tribal Constitution and Bylaws in 1935, amendments and improvements have been made in the operating procedures of the Tribal Government. However, with all this legislation on the part of the Federal and Tribal Governments, a look

at the Tribal Constitution will show that most of the Tribe's decisions must be approved by the Secretary of the Interior, through BIA channels.

During the 1950's the Tribe had considerable income from oil and gas resources, and per capita payments were made to eligible tribal members. During this time, patterns of tribal expenditures were established, which today make it difficult for the Tribe to set a budget within their income.

Many of the older members of the Tribe were opposed to the Reorganization Act of 1934, and expressed their displeasure with some of the present activities of the Tribal Council. Membership in the Tribal Council is dependent on skillful "tribal politics" and often results in actions and decisions that do not meet with the approval of the entire tribe.

Part of the reason for this is that no provision is made for a primary election and it is therefore possible to be elected by a comparatively small number of votes since there are usually many candidates for the nine positions on the Council. For example, the 1966 election had 56 candidates competing.

There is tremendous pressure on the Tribal officials involved with day to day problems. This points up the need for a set of administrative procedures or guidelines to clearly outline the functions and performance of the various activities which are the responsibilities of the Tribal Staff.

The two-year term of the Business Council members is not conducive to the continuity of tribal programs. Reluctance to make decisions that may not be politically popular often results in a course of action that may be detrimental to the program and have an adverse effect on over-all accomplishments. Furthermore, continuity in business matters of the Tribe is constantly threatened by the absence of a competent business manager for complex tribal affairs. This means there has been no systematic monitoring of financial transactions. Recently, the BIA required that all substantial checks of the Tribe be approved by the BIA Reservation Superintendent.

Browning

The town of Browning is managed by an elected mayor and Town Council. Town officials may or may not be of Indian descent. Because Browning is small, the same individuals participate as members of the Town Council, the School Board, as well as in business ownership and operation.

There are two fire fighting services, each with its own fire equipment operating in the town of Browning. One is the city volunteer fire fighting company and the other is the BIA volunteer fire fighting service. Both respond to all calls within the town. In addition, there are over 200 trained Blackfeet forest fire fighters.

Police and Law Enforcement Functions

It is particularly in the areas of police function and law enforcement that the overlapping function of various governments are in evidence.

The Blackfeet Tribe.--Through its constitution (derived through treaty and legislative enactment), the Tribe has promulgated a set of laws on misdemeanors with jurisdiction over enrolled members. Through this constitution there has evolved a court and police system. The Blackfeet Tribe hires five policement for duty in the Town of Browning and on the reservation.

The Blackfeet Tribal Court consists of three judges appointed by the Blackfeet Tribal Council. The judges serve for an undefined term, but may only be removed by the Tribal Council for cause. Misdemeanors against the tribal laws are outlined in the Tribal Constitution and specified in the code of law and order, and are handled by the Tribal Court.

A person held or convicted of a misdemeanor by the Blackfeet Tribal Court would be lodged in the Blackfeet Tribal jail in Browning. Sometimes inmates of this jail are lodged in the City jail in Cut Bank, and the Glacier County jail in Cut Bank. Their board and room expenses are paid by the Tribe. The Blackfeet Tribal jail is inadequate.

The Federal Government.--Jurisdiction over the 11 major felonies committed by or against an Indian on the reservation is held by the Federal Government. A white man or a non-enrolled Indian committing any felony on the reservation against a non-Indian, or an Indian not enrolled would come under State jurisdiction. An enrolled Indian committing a felony off the reservation would come under State jurisdiction.

Crimes in the nature of the 11 major felonies committed by or against an Indian on the reservation are tried in the Federal court in Great Falls, Montana. An example of this would be murder of or by an Indian, committed on the reservation.

The Federal Government has two BIA agents stationed in the town of Browning for duty in the town and on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. These BIA agents investigate all felonies and other

major crimes that occur. The FBI agent stationed in Great Falls is on call, and responds when called to make further investigations.

The State of Montana.--The State holds jurisdiction over matters neither under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government nor the Blackfeet Tribal Constitution. Examples of this would be the issuance of drivers' licenses, marriage, divorce, adoption, criminal matters involving non-Indians, and apparently civil matters.

The 9th judicial district of the State of Montana covers all the areas of the Blackfeet Reservation. The reservation lies totally within the boundaries of Glacier County and Pondera County in Montana.

An elected Justice of the Peace resides in the town of Browning, and is responsible for administering State laws that fall within the Court's jurisdiction. An example would be the Justice of the Peace power to marry.

The State of Montana has one highway patrolman stationed in the town of Browning who has power of arrest only on any State or Federal highway. On a Federal Indian Road, the BIA police would be responsible together with the tribal police.

A person held or convicted under laws falling in the jurisdiction of the State of Montana is lodged in the Glacier County jail in Cut Bank, the Pondera County jail in Conrad, or the Montana State Prison in Deer Lodge.

The County.--Administration of all property taxation and collection on Indian land that is fee patented is done by the county. Indian land that is held in trust by the Federal Government is not subject to any county or state jurisdiction. All institutional commitments that are not of the nature of a Federal crime must be channeled through the county to the State, because the Federal Government and Tribe do not have adequate facilities.

The County Sheriff acts in his official capacity in those areas of the law reserved strictly to the County or State, for instance, in process serving, or in criminal problems related to white and/or non-enrolled Indians. There are areas of legal confusion as to who has jurisdiction when it comes to State institutions. For example, in the committing of a person to the Mental Institution in Warm Springs, although the County attorney would prepare the necessary papers, the County Sheriff would not take the person to the institution.

There is no County juricial power, except that the Board of County Commissioners do act as arbitrators in the determination of matters on problems of property assessment and welfare.

The Town of Browning.--The town makes ordinances, such as traffic ordinances, that are only applicable to non-enrolled Indians and white persons, although violations by enrolled Indians are enforced in Tribal Court.

Three policemen are hired by the town for law enforcement. There is no city police judge.

The town of Browning uses the Blackfeet Tribal Jail. When incarceration is for a lengthy period of time, the Glacier County jail isused.

Summary.--It is obvious at the onset that the problems of law and order in the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and the town of Browning are complicated. Often problems of jurisdiction are encountered.

The incidence of crime on the reservation is largely limited to minor offenses by juveniles. The bulk of adult arrests is for intoxication.

Economy

The main source of employment and income for tribal members on the reservation are agriculture and government employment, with smaller shares contributed by commerce and industry (Table I). There is little manufacturing on the reservation although plans for its introduction are being made, and a few families as well as the Blackfeet Arts and Crafts Association produce ethnic arts and crafts.

Following agriculture and government employment come wages earned from working in Glacier National Park, from the Great Northern Railroad, from off-Reservation fire-fighting, and from off-Reservation construction projects. Total for this category was approximately $660,000.

Other sources of income for reservation families are: public assistance, general assistance, unemployment compensation, O.A.S.I.[1] payments, surplus commodities, and government medical services. Most of these categories would fall under the general term "welfare services."

Another source of income for the Tribe and Tribal members has been Land Claims funds. In 1935 a land claims award was made which netted each enrolled Blackfeet Indian $85, while the Tribe retained

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[1]Old Age and Survivor's Insurance

TABLE I

EMPLOYMENT FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS AND SOURCES OF INCOME ON THE RESERVATION, 1967*

Type of Work	Number of Employees	Income
Ranching and farming	230	$ 4,000,000
Forestry and sawmilling	31	200,000
Government (Federal, State, County, City, Tribal)	224	1,500,000
Commercial and Industrial Enterprises (reservation-based)	55	404,000 (wages)
Other (reservation-based sources, including welfare services)	22	220,000
Total:	562	

*Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Profile of the Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Reservation, Montana, Claims Legislation Report, 28 August, 1968, p. 12.

an additional $15 on its accounts for each person. No information is available on how these funds were used.

Presently, the Tribe is expecting another distribution from the so-called "Sweet Grass Hills Claim" which has been awarded to both Blackfeet and Gros Venre Tribes. But the two tribes have not yet reached an agreement on how to divide the claim-funds. Tribal Council members have asked various community committees how the proceeds should be divided. They found that overwhelmingly the local committees want all the funds divided on a per capita basis, rather than to have any of the funds managed by the Tribal Council. Only as a second alternative, i.e., if Washington disapproves of the plan for individual allotment, should the distribution be according to the following schedule: 10 per cent for education, 15 per cent for land purchase, and 75 per cent for per capita distribution.

Agriculture

Agriculture plays the major role in the economic life of the area. It has been the major source of personal income, about $4,000,000 in 1967.

There are approximately 1,500,000 acres within the exterior boundaries of the reservation. Present utilization and ownership are shown in Table II.

The most important crops raised in Glacier County are: dryland grains, i.e. winter wheat, durum wheat, rye, barley and oats. The winter crops are led by alfalfa. Annual feed crops are hay and wild hay. Approximately 40,000 sheep and 40,000 cattle are raised in Glacier County with numbers fluctuating yearly; swine number about 2,000 and approximately 10,000 chickens are raised each year in the county.[1] In addition, vast timber resources exist on the reservation. Approximately 60,000 acres of commercial timber are available. The mill in the industrial park processes high-grade Douglas fir and white pine from this acreage.

Mining

The Blackfeet Reservation has two oil and gas fields partly within, and one field wholly within the limits of the reservation. In 1960 production of oil was approximately 1,400,000 barrels. The fields are producing now at a reduced rate. Production will

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[1]Harrison Fagg, "Development Opportunities: Blackfeet Indian Reservation" a report prepared for the Blackfeet Tribe in cooperation with the Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C., 1967.

TABLE II

OWNERSHIP AND UTILIZATION OF
RESERVATION LANDS*

Category	Per Cent of Total	Ownership Per Cent		Use Per Cent	
		Tribal	Indiv	Indian	Non-Indian
Grazing	72.0	12	88	75	25
Commercial Timber	4.0	90	10	100	0
Non-Commercial Timber	8.7	23	77	100	0
Dry Farm	14.0	13	87	14	86
Irrigated	0.6	25	75	34	66
Wild Lands	0.2	100	0	0	0
Other Uses Non-Agricultural	0.5	73	27	77	23

*Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Profile of the Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Reservation, Montana, Claims Legislation Report, 28 August 1968, p. 3.

continue to diminish unless new discoveries extend the fields, or improved technology provides means for increasing recovery.

Property income from the oil fields in the eastern part of the reservation provided approximately $78,000 in income distributed to individuals. This income comes primarily from property leases to oil companies. The oil fields provide the Tribal Government with an income of $356,200. Thus, oil income provides about 80 per cent of the Tribal budget.

Trade and Commerce

Browning is the major trade center for the reservation. In the town of Browning are found the following businesses: 1 hotel, 4 motels, 3 grocery stores, 2 laundries, 10 gas stations, 6 eating places, 14 retail stores, 1 bank, 1 bowling alley, 1 cinema, 1 automobile dealer, 3 barber shops, 5 bars, 1 pool hall, and 1 state liquor store.

M. K. Fields, the editor of the Glacier Reporter, the local newspaper, reports that 49 per cent of the local businesses are owned by persons having some degree of Indian blood; 51 per cent are white-owned businesses.[1]

Cut Bank, the County Seat of Glacier County, serves the eastern portion of the reservation. Great Falls is the nearest major shopping center. Kalispel, 100 miles to the west, and Havre, 161 miles to the east serve the reservation to a lesser extent. Carston, Alberta, Canada, 15 miles north of the reservation line serves the northwest portion of the reservation.

The First National Bank of Browning is the only bank in the reservation. The bank is the major funnel of financial activity for the Tribe. Its two major accounts are BIA and the Tribe.

Family Income and Employment

Although information sources differ in their estimates and methods of data collection, average family income is generally reported to be very low. There are 1,308 family units with an estimated 4.9 persons per family. The BIA has estimated an average of $3,250 income per family.[2] In 1967, a sample of 73 reservation families showed a median income of $3,550.[3] This author estimates

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[1]M. K. Fields, Glacier Reporter, Browning Montana, 15 May 1967.

[2]People of the Blackfeet Tribe, op. cit., p. 32.

[3]Lynn Robbins, "Economics, Household Composition, and the Family Cycle--Blackfeet Case," American Ethnological Society, Proceedings of the 1968 Annual Spring Meeting, pp. 196-215.

that 55 per cent of reservation families have incomes below $3,000.

Unemployment is very high. Tables III and IV give a picture of the available labor force and unemployment percentages. The unemployment figures are largely due to the lack of employment opportunities. Year round jobs are scarce. Available opportunities in the area are mostly seasonal, thus throwing many workers into a low-income bracket. This is true for Indian and non-Indian alike.

Unemployment is almost 50 per cent during the winter months. During the periods of peak employment 25-35 per cent of the labor force remain unemployed. This can partially be explained by the fact that 45 per cent of the local labor force are unskilled (30 per cent are semi-skilled and 25 per cent are skilled).

Jobs that do become available are often accompanied by limiting requirements, such as the setting of high educational levels, long years of experience required for the job, and/or emphasis on racial preferences. In addition, work categories are numbered and few.

Economic Trends and Problems

The various studies of the development potential of the reservation[2] agree that to a great extent economic resources are undeveloped. In forestry, the total local employment rate could be raised from 12 per year to a potential employment (from allowable cut) of 80. There could be substantial increases in growth through increased productivity in agriculture; the mineral potential, for example, coal, though its actual potential is unknown, has possibilities. The field of arts and crafts is only partially exploited. Much more could be done to meet the needs of Glacier National Park tourists and the influx of traffic in the summer season. Winter sports and other recreational activities could be introduced.

Training is particularly limited in specialized fields. The percentage of high school graduates continues to grow annually, but the high school offers only minimal vocational training.

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[1] Profile of the Blackfeet Tribe, op. cit.

[2] Harrison Fagg, op. cit.; Profile of the Blackfeet Tribe, op. cit.; and BIA, "Population Support Capacity Study, Blackfeet Indian Reservation," Browning, Montana, mimeographed, 1968.

TABLE III

RESIDENT INDIAN POPULATION OF WORKING AGE
(16 YEARS OLD AND OVER)*

	Total	Male	Female
Total 16 years and over	3254	1613	1641
16 - 19 years	585	286	299
20 - 24 years	753	370	383
25 - 34 years	660	329	331
35 - 44 years	562	290	272
45 - 64 years	443	220	223
65 years and over	251	118	133
Not In Labor Force (16 years and over) Total:	1739	444	1295
Students (16 years and over, including those away at school)	329	153	176
Men, physically or mentally disabled, retired, institutionalized, etc.	291	291	-
Women for whom no child-care substitutes are available	1080	-	1080
Women, housewives, physically or mentally disabled, institutionalized, etc.	39	-	39
Available Labor Force (16 years and over	1515	1169	346
Employed Total	901	686	215
Permanent (more than 12 months)	741	551	190
Temporary (including persons away on seasonal work)	160	135	25
Unemployed	614	483	131
Of these, persons actively seeking work	409	378	31

*Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Profile of the Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Reservation, Montana, Claims Legislation Report, 28 August, 1968, p. 3.

TABLE IV

INDIAN EMPLOYMENT, 1965-1967*

Report Period	Total Indian Population	Labor Force	Unemployed	Per Cent of Labor Force Unemployed
3/22-24/ 1965	5516 (2723 M 2793 F)	1965 (1455 M 510 F)	970 (730 M 240 F)	49
9/20-24/ 1965	5516 (2723 M 2793 F)	1816 (1406 M 410 F)	651 (526 M 125 F)	36
3/21-25/ 1966	6381 (3142 M 3239 F)	1869 (1353 M 516 F)	824 (598 M 226 F)	44
9/26-30/ 1966	6381 (3142 M 3239 F)	1869 (1353 M 516 F)	629 (403 M 266 F)	33
3/19-25/ 1967	6406 (3156 M 3250 F)	1732 (1276 M 456 F)	665 (519 M 146 F)	38
0/25-29/ 1967	6406 (3156 M 3250 F)	1732 (1276 M 456 F)	223 (97 M 126 F)	131
			359/682	37

*Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Profile of the Blackfeet, op. cit., p. 17.

[1]Approximately 359 men were temporarily employed during this period as Fire Fighters. Actual unemployment following return from Fire was approximately 37%.

At the present time there are two organizations set up to plan economic development on the reservation. First is the Industrial Development Committee of the Blackfeet Tribe, the second is the Browning Development Corporation. In 1964 a 10-year plan was prepared. Projects that have been completed or are proposed are as follows:

1. The Blackfeet Industrial Park. The Industrial Park is a 67-acre, $350,000 site. It has water, sanitary sewers, paved streets, railroad spurs, storage facilities, and loading docks.

2. A lumber mill has already been established adjacent to the Industrial Park.

3. Planned improvements of streets, curbs, gutters, storm sewers, and sidewalks is in progress. When the town gets its new look, perhaps industrial representatives will not turn away as they have in the past.

4. There are plans for a 6,300 foot airport runway and glide path at East Glacier -- a town about 20 miles west of Browning.

5. Tourism and recreation development: The St. Mary Lake development will have 55 motel units, a marina, campground, and miscellaneous facilities.

6. There are plans for a component house plant to be located in the Blackfeet Industrial Park.

7. A feasibility study for a ceramic industry has been carried out. A small pilot plant in the industrial park is contemplated.

8. Two proposals to put boys camps on the reservation are pending.

9. Since agriculture is of prominent importance to the reservation economy, an agricultural feasibility report has been commissioned. Such programs as feed lots, sales yards, feed processing plants, and an agricultural counseling service may be implemented.

10. A Model Cities application was submitted in 1968. It was not accepted at that time. However, the Tribe-Town was advised to resubmit at a later date.

Social Conditions

Housing

There are approximately 1,050 Indian owned or occupied homes on the reservation. Of this number 680 are sub-standard, with 280 needing renovation and 400 not worth repairing. One hundred new homes are required to adequately house all the reservation tribal members.

Inadequate rental property is a deterring factor for introducing industry because this means that there is inadequate lodging for supportive personnel. In a number of instances, grade and high school teachers had to be turned away because they could not find housing. This is also the problem of families from isolated areas with school age children who are forced to move into town to have their children educated. The overall result is overcrowded dwellings.

Absentee landlords also present a problem. In numerous cases negligence in maintaining their property leads to substandard housing for those renting, and in a few places, abandonment altogether.

Health

In 1953 the government reported that the diseases currently seen on the Blackfeet Reservation were diseases of infancy and childhood, upper respiratory infections, influenza, pneumonia, malnutrition, gastro-intestinal disturbances, conjunctivitis, cardio-vascular conditions, Tuberculosis, and cancer. The principal causes of death were listed as diseases of infancy, pneumonia, TB, and cardio-vascular conditions.[1] In 1958 the U.S. Public Health Service reported that infant death rates were quite high, with pneumonia being the major cause. Hepatitis and tuberculosis are also reported to have a high mortality.

According to a Model Cities Proposal, submitted in 1968 by the Blackfeet Tribe and Town of Browning, the two major health-related problems are alcoholism and mental health.[2] There is

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[1]"Report with Respect to the House Resolution Authorizing the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs to conduct an investigation of the B.I.A.," House Report #2503, 82nd Congress, 2nd Session, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1953.

[2]Town of Browning, Montana, and the Blackfeet Tribe, "Application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for a grant to plan a Comprehensive Model Reservation Program. Blackfeet Indian Reservation," 1968.

local concern over attempted suicide and suicide by adolescent Indians.

Life expectancy

We do not have information on life expectancy on the Blackfeet Reservation. For Indians as a whole in the United States, life expectancy is 63.8 years. For the total United States population it is 70.2 years. At Browning's Public Health Service hospital, the infant death rate is reported as being two and one-half times that of the infant death rate of the entire United States.

Diet and Nutrition

Most of the Blackfeet participate in the cash economy for foodstuffs, and on the average, about one-half of the families on the reservation receive surplus government commodities. Malnutrition exists on the reservation, but it is typically related to alcoholism.

Leisure Activities

Anthropologists recognize that many leisure activities, especially games, serve non-formal socialization processes.[1] Traditionally among the Blackfeet, games of physical skill and games of chance were both present, and evidently important in pre-reservation times where physical skill was important both to the exploitation of the environment and in military action, and where chance, on the other hand, was a reality of life in a relatively hostile natural environment.

Today, however, games of chance seem to predominate on the reservation. Perhaps this is related to a "culture of dependency" upon outside sources which creates a philosophy of "it's a matter of luck how one survives." Such games as the "stick game," the "feather game," and the "bone game," continue to exist. Now, however, poker and other card games are new and popular games of chance.

Traditionally dancing was a competitive "sport." Today, dancing is competitive only during "Indian Days" in July, while during the rest of the year it is mostly of a social nature.

If horse racing is considered a game of physical strength, it is the only traditional sport of that kind that survives. On the other hand, modern games of both physical skill and strategy, such as football, basketball and baseball, seem to be popular, particularly with the school population.

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[1]For a discussion of this, see J. M. Roberts, M. J. Arth, and R. R. Bush, "Games in Culture," American Anthropologist, 1961, pp. 597-605.

During most seasons of the year hunting and fishing are available in the countryside surrounding Browning. Browning's recreation facilities consist of 1 bowling alley, one theater, one pool hall, and five bars.

Information Media

Radio and TV: The radio stations which are received are located in Lethbridge, Canada, and several American radio stations, i.e. Havre, Shelby, and Great Falls. Television is received from Lethbridge, Canada, and two stations from Great Falls, Montana, are received through a municipal TV relay tower.

Press: Browning has its own newspaper, The Glacier Reporter. There is also a newspaper published in Cut Bank, Montana, 35 miles to the east. Newspapers are also available from Great Falls, Montana.

Bookshops and libraries: There are no bookshops, as such, in Browning. In the curio shops and the drugstore some paperbacks and popular magazines are sold. Men's and women's specialty magazines (Stag, True Confessions) predominate.

There is a small public library located in the Catholic Community Center.

Social Welfare

Welfare provisions on the reservation include the following:

1. General assistance. In January of 1968, 524 families, or approximately 50 per cent of the families on the reservation qualified for general assistance. In the winter months presumably "unemployable persons" who are unable to find work qualify for general assistance. In October 1967, 96 cases (families?) qualified for general assistance. This was the month of lowest expenditure for 1967. This would be approximately 10 per cent of the families on the reservation.

2. Aid to Dependent Children. The percentage of people under 21 on the reservation who received Aid to Dependent Children is 29 per cent.

3. Old Age Assistance. Persons 65 and over on the reservation number 538. The percentage of them receiving Old Age Assistance is 28 per cent.

4. Aid for Permanently and Totally Disabled Persons. Fifty people qualify for this benefit.

5. Aid for the Needy Blind. Four persons qualify.

6. Government Commodity Program. On a monthly average, 549 families, or approximately 50 per cent of the families received commodities.

Present housing is inadequate. Many homes lack running water and electricity. Broken family ties create problems in the emotional development of children.

Welfare clients tend to come to believe that they are powerless to change their situation. If they try to supplement an inadequate public assistance grant by working, the social worker reduces their monthly grant. Since employment is only seasonal, many families continue to be dependent on welfare.

Recently the State Department of Welfare was forced to reduce the amount of Aid to Dependent Children a family could receive. Not a single welfare family on the reservation made a formal complaint about such a drastic action.

Social Organization

The traditional framework for Blackfeet social organization has undergone many changes. Traditionally, the basic family structure was a large bilaterally extended family comprised of more or less independent polygamous families. Marriage involved the transfer of goods from the groom's family to the bride's family. A preferred marriage form was sororal polygamy, with the wife(s) coming from another local community, that is, there was local exogamy. Evidently, this provided a major integrating factor for the various local groups of Blackfeet who did not have a clan-type structure.

Furthermore, the "bands" tended to be migratory in accordance with their ecological adaption to game resources. Rarely did these local groups (bands), at least in pre-reservation times, exceed 200-400 people, except when they united for summer hunts and tribal ceremonials such as the Sun Dance, and in war and defense.

At the present time it appears that the social organization of the Blackfeet is not unlike that of their white neighbors. Income levels (considering government services and facilities for the Indian) are almost the same as are associational patterns.

A high percentage of Blackfeet members have reached a degree of acculturation where they share life styles with their non-Indian neighbors and do not participate in a distinctly Indian culture, as such. For example, Browning has the following civic groups:

Lions Club, American Legion, Garden Club, Soroptimists, Legion Auxiliary, Royal Neighbors, American Red Cross, Delta Kappa Gamma, and Montana Education Association.

However, there are still some traditional organizations and ceremonies in existence on the reservation. In 1967 the Pipe Dance and Beaver Ceremony were held. The giving of presents casually or at an organized function is also practiced. And perhaps most interesting of all, the Crazy Dog Clan, a very highly honored society to which one had to be elected, is still operating. Members had to be not only extremely fierce in battle, but also had to function among their own people as "camp" police.

Today, since the Blackfeet are not often inclined to present their grievances in court, the Crazy Dogs have been known to call on a thieving neighbor or on an improvident husband and to employ their own persuasions toward reformation.[1]

The Blackfeet social organization may continue to change in the future mainly due to the changing role of the Indian men. Under almost constant financial stress, husbands tend to desert their wives. This qualifies wives for Aid to Dependent Children. In the meantime, other man have learned that a biological father is not necessarily legally responsible for the care of his "family." Common law marriages and illegitimacy are thus continuing to increase.[2]

Information on family life is primarily from the Heart Butte community, south of Browning. This was collected by Lynn Robins of the University of Oregon in 1967.[3] The sample was largely rural, and may not be representative of the entire reservation.

The study found six household types, the names and compositions of which follow:

1. The independent nuclear family household. Husband and wife, or spouseless husband or spouseless wife, along with one or more off-spring. In some instances these families include miscellaneous relatives of the wife or husband, or even non-kin.

2. Grandparent-grandchild household. One or more grand-

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[1]Richard Lancaster, Piegan: A Look from within at the Life, Times, and Legacy of an American Indian Tribe, Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1966.

[2]Town of Browning, Montana, and the Blackfeet Tribe, op. cit.

[3]Lynn Robins, op. cit.

parents or step-grandparents as household heads with one or more grandchildren or step-grandchildren. This family is functionally indistinguishable from independent nuclear family households. Nearly all grandparents in this category have raised their dependent grandchildren from infancy serving as parent surrogates in all respects. They have passed, or at least plan to pass property, i.e. land and dwellings, to the grandchildren. The latter is the expected mode of inheritance from parent to dependent off-spring.

3. Purely conjugal pair household. Conjugal pair with or without miscellaneous spouseless and childless kinsmen.

4. Single person household. Spouseless lone individual maintaining a separate household.

5. Joint family household. Married siblings and their off-spring. Spouses may or may not be present. Only one such household is recorded in the sample.

6. Extended family household. Parents or spouseless parent with married or separated childrenand their off-spring. The household head is one of parents in the ascending generation. The household head is the principle decision maker, owner of land and/or dwelling. No extended household consists of more than two nuclear families.

Of the total of 73 families in this sample, the percentage breakdown of family types is as follows:

Independent nuclear	60 per cent
Grandparent-grandchild	10 " "
Pure conjugal pair	7 " "
Single person	3 " "
Joint family household	1 " "
Extended family household	19 " "

Robins hypothesized and found that there was a definite relationship between relatively high and stable family incomes and single family households. Conversely, there is also a relationship between low and instable income and multiple family households.

Although crowding, etc. is bad, Robins finds that it is clearly advantageous for families with unstable income to consolidate their resources to sustain themselves throughout the year on a collective rather than an individual basis.

Another interesting result of Robins' work is that there is a cycle of family types, depending on the age of the head of the

family and his earning power. There are four stages:

1. Stage 1 is the earliest stage of the family cycle. Forty-two per cent of the families here are independent nuclear types.

2. Stage 2 is the most economically productive age group; 81 per cent of the sample is independent nuclear.

3. State 3 shows a gradual trend from independent nuclear family toward late phase family types; 44 per cent of the families were independent nuclear.

4. Stage 4's most striking feature is that the elderly heads of families continue to support their off-spring and their grandchildren; 20 per cent of the families in this group are independent nuclear.

So, it appears that on the Blackfeet Reservation the kinds of households in which families are organized depends mainly on the amount and stability of income.

Religion

Christian

Browning has churches of the Methodist, Catholic, Latter Day Saints (Mormon), Baptist, Church of Christ, and Assembly of God. The most influential ministers in this group are the Methodist and Catholic. Although these two ministers have attempted to promote constructive change in the Indian community, their attitude seems somewhat paternalistic. One of the local clergy is popularly believed to be buying up medicine bundles so as to elimnate the "pagan beliefs" of the local people.

Traditional

The Sun Dance, the major religious ceremony of the Plains Indian, has not been performed on the Blackfeet Reservation in some years. However, the Pipe Dance, performed after the first spring thunderstorm, was performed at least as recently as 1967.

There are two Indian medico-religious practioners (medicine men) in and around Browning.

Other than the Pipe Dance, there are other traces of tradit-

lonalism in religion. Several years ago a horse was killed in honor of the burial of an Indian Catholic (in the Heart Butte area).

Social Trends

An atmosphere of change pervaded Browning in the Fall of 1969. Much of the physical and psychological change that has occurred, and is occurring, is probably a result of the work that went into a Model Cities Proposal that was submitted in the spring of 1968.[1] The proposal was eventually turned down by the federal government, but it must have been seminal for the climate of change in the town.

One of the most apparent changes is the paving and lighting of the city's streets. Browning now looks more like a town than a large slum. There is a new variety store and coin - operated laundry; a new newspaper has been established to promote political change in the tribal council.

In addition, a two-volume community development report has just been completed by a consulting firm. The construction of a new tribal Community Center is almost complete. It has an indoor swimming pool as one of its facilities. The Methodist minister has established a day-care center with a program to promote a healthy self-image for Indian pre-schoolers. The foundation for a new school building has been laid. When the building is finished there will be a new curriculum designed by two of the system's four principals.

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[1]Town of Browning, Montana, and the Blackfeet Tribe, op. cit.

EDUCATION

There are about 12,000 Blackfeet Indians enrolled on the Blackfeet Agency. Of that number, about 6,000 reside on or near the reservation. Over 2,000 children of one-fourth or more degree of Indian ancestry were in attendance in public or Bureau of Indian Affairs schools during the school year 1967-1968.

Blackfeet Indians represent about 90 per cent of the total school population. Children residing on the Blackfeet Reservation attend public schools located in Browning, Star, Babb, Badger-fisher, Croff-Wren, East Glacier and Heart Butte communities. A public school dormitory for Blackfeet children, operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with a rated capacity of 160 pupils is located on the reservation. The majority of students enrolled in the dormitory qualify because their homes are in isolated areas very distant from day schools.

Elementary students comprise 87 per cent of the total dormitory enrollment. Indian students of one-fourth or more degree of Indian blood who can not adjust to their environment or whose educational needs cannot be met in local public school are placed on off-reservation schools in Chilocco, Oklahoma; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Riverside, California; Pierre, South Dakota; Wahpeton, South Dakota; Flandreau, South Dakota; or at the Institute of American Indian Arts in New Mexico.

Thirty per cent of the Indian high school graduates of 1966-67 enrolled in colleges and universities. Sixty-five per cent continued their education through Haskell Institute, Kansas, or adult educational training programs, and the remaining percentage of Indian students were either married, entered the Armed Forces, or were undecided about their future plans.

Public schools receive supplemental funding and services through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Public Law 874, Public Law 815, Johnson O'Malley-BIA cooperative programs, the Blackfeet Tribe, Public Health Service, and through State funding brought about by close working relationships with the State Department of Education.

Children residing near the Blackfeet Reservation attend schools in Cardston, Alberta, Canada; Cut Bank, Montana; and Valier, Montana. Indian students enrolled in these schools are in the minority. These students depend on services provided by the Blackfeet Reservation since they are unavailable in these towns.

According to the National Education Association, the median educational attainment level of the State of Montana in 1967 was 11.6 years; that of the white population being 11.7 years, and the non-white population being 8.7. Drop-out rates continue to be high on the reservation.[1]

The children who attend the Browning School System come from three locations: the Town of Browning itself, rural areas surrounding Browning, and children living in the BIA dormitory established to house children from remote areas. Buses serving the day school children travel up to two hours each way.

Physical Plants

There are four separate school buildings in Browning. The oldest is the elementary school, the main structure of which was built in 1924. It is today in a deteriorated condition.

As population expanded and more school space was needed, additional structures were built. Each newer structure was built to the west of its predecessor. The three later schools, the High School, K. W. Bergen, and Vina Chatten, are progressively newer in design and appearance.

The foundation is currently being dug for a new junior high school (Fall 1969). The schools serve children from kindergarten through the 12th grade. The Indian enrollment in 1968 was as follows: elementary - 1,181; and secondary - 311.

Non-Indian enrollment for elementary school is 141 and secondary school is 53. There are no mission or Bureau of Indian Affairs schools located on the Blackfeet Reservation. Off-reservation Bureau of Indian Affairs schools are available for students who meet criteria for admission. The local Bureau of Indian Affairs Public School Dormitory is available to Indian children attending the Browning public schools.

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[1]The Montana State Department of Education, after 1967, stopped including sections on dropouts for the reservations in Montana. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory report on Indian dropouts does not include data below grade 8 and is therefore incomplete, since there is indication of dropouts taking place in grades six and seven. (See Alphonse D. Selinger, The American Indian High School Dropout: The Magnitude of the Problem, Portland, Oregon: The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1968.

Boarding School

A new BIA dormitory was completed in 1964 at a cost of $750,000. It has a capacity of 160 students, equally divided between boys and girls. Dormitory personnel is predominantly female. Four of the five dormitory personnel interviewed were Indian and had lived in BIA dorms as students. The fifth interview was with the dorm superintendent who is white. Of the sample interviewed (N=5), all thought that Indian culture and history was of importance to Indian students.

Twenty of the students interviewed in the Browning school system were dorm residents. There were no serious complaints; most liked the dorm.

In 1968 there was an informal channel of communication between the BIA dormitory and the Browning public school. The School Superintendent's wife was the Instructional Aide Supervisor for the dorm, and the dorm principal's wife was a kindergarten teacher in the Browning school system.

Administration

One superintendent and four principals make up the administrative staff of the Browning schools; none of them are Indian. A Tribal Education Committee was organized in 1965. Its interest or impact has not been felt since its inception.

The School Board and administration in Browning operate the school system. The School Board consists of five members--four of the five are highly acculturated and economically successful Indians. Although School Board meetings were officially open to the public, in the past these meetings were not widely publicized or well attended. None of the local people interviewed, for example, had been to a School Board meeting within the last five years. More recently, active effort is being made to encourage public participation in School Board meetings. There is no PTA in Browning. Parent-teacher conferences held several times a year provide the opportunity for communication between parents and teachers.

Teachers

Data gathered from an anonymous Teacher Questionnaire indicate that certification is as follows: 77 per cent, yes; 3 per cent, no; 20 per cent, no response. The latter figure probably includes additional teachers without certification.

The Browning schools claimed to have a most difficult time recruiting teachers, and the greatest single problem was teacher housing, which was poor to impossible. Many commuted from East Glacier or Cut Bank, while single teachers lived in local motels. Few teachers with families could find adequate housing.

Not all of the teachers and administrators in the Browning system are sensitive to the differing cultural values of their students and neighbors. But significant numbers are. Young teachers who come from parts of the country thousands of miles away from any reservation seem to be particularly sensitive to the needs and problems of Indian students. At Browning, several of these teachers have managed to establish close communication with their Indian students.

Despite their willingness, however, they often lack specific skills. There are new teachers every year who want to know how to relate cross-culturally. They <u>want</u> to be shown how to teach children from another cultural background. Presently information on "How to Teach Indians" is provided informally by both culturally sensitive and prejudiced teachers with more experience. There is interest on both the administrative and classroom level in having a <u>meaningful</u> new teacher orientation.

<u>Curriculum</u>

The Browning school system has experienced two levels of curriculum innovation. On the first level, pre-first grade was begun in 1963 in the K. W. Bergen School. New Math was introduced in the elementary school (5-8) in 1962, and a business education course was added in the High School (9-12) in 1966, as well as New Math (in 1955), and language labs (foreign language lab in 1960 and English in 1967).

On the second level, Browning has innovated courses in Indian culture and history. The first Indian (Blackfeet) culture and history course was begun in the high school in 1967. It worked so well that in 1969, a similar course was offered in the elementary school.

There has also been an innovation in extra-curricular activities in the high school. Two teachers and a group of Indian students have formed an Indian Club. By searching through old ethnographies they are developing an organization structure and ideas for activities based on the way of life lived traditionally.

Two of the four school principals are working on a new program for the new junior high that is being constructed. Not only will curriculum innovations be adopted, but also a selection tech-

nique to choose teachers for work with Indian students will be instituted.

On the whole, Browning's curriculum is similar to all public schools in Montana, with the exception of the Indian culture and history courses available in the elementary and high schools.

Parents

We asked a sample of local parents numbering thirty-three whether they thought the school was following what the majority of local parents wanted for their children; 24 said yes, 4 said no, and 5 did not know. We also asked the same sample of parents if they felt parents should have control of the schools their children attended; 6 said yes, 25 said no, and 2 did not know. The third question we asked the parents was, "Do you feel that you have any voice in deciding what goes on at the school?"; 16 said yes, 14 said no, 1 did not know, and we had no data for two.

Adult Education

VISTA-taught GED (General Equivalency Diploma) classes are available. Local Indian adults can receive the equivalent of a high school diploma.

The University of Montana, beginning in school year 1969-70, is offering University extension courses in Browning. Indian GED holders only will be accepted as students, according to the teacher of these courses, who is an Indian. Aspects of Indian education is a major topic that will be covered in this extension series.

Problems

School children, as well as their parents, are limited in experiences and in contacts with the isolated environment in which they live.

Teachers are unable to find adequate housing in which they may reside and participate as members of the community. Housing must be obtained in Cut Bank, or in other nearby areas. Teachers are not fully oriented to the problems which face the community residents. Many of the teachers are not aware of the living conditions of their students.

The student's colloquial use of the English language fosters difficulty in communication. Severe climatic conditions, limited boarding facilities, length of bus routes, and limited or non-

existent extra-curricular activities for students residing away from Browning interfere with the day-to-day educational progress of individuals.

Operating costs of small schools on the reservation are extremely high compared to other communities in the United States. Limited experiences, lack of material, high maintenance costs for operation, and scarcity of quality teachers create under-achievers and potential dropouts.

The District has submitted four applications in 1967 for building programs under Public Law 815, and submitted two more in 1968. There is a definite need for increased recreational facilities in this area. Public parks as well as improved school playgrounds are needed.

There are no social services in the school system other than those given as part of extra duty by the teachers, principals and guidance personnel. Thus there is no social worker to bring needed social services as a full time activity inside the school system. There is one student counselor assigned per student load of 2,000. Services are necessarily limited to problem children, testing services and vocational guidance. Full-time speech therapists and other supportive services for schools on the reservation are inadequate in number.

Space limitations curtail the introduction of material research centers and areas for the use of independent study groups. Smaller class loads, special education, and a diversity of curriculum is needed to meet the individual needs of learners. After-hours tutorial services provided in study centers in major communities are non-existent.

Curricula are geared toward higher education. Limited space and finance prevents the school from expanding services for the majority of students who will be employed in the vocational fields.

In the past 15 years the enrollment in this area has more than doubled. School census figures indicate that if this growth rate continues the school population will double in the next ten years.

There is a shortage of space in the schools. The pupil-teacher ratio in junior high is 1:35, and is 1:28 in the high school. Space limitations prevent expansion of existing programs and the introduction of enrichment programs. Given the projected increase in population, a continuing building program is essential if the reservation is going to keep abreast of school needs.

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